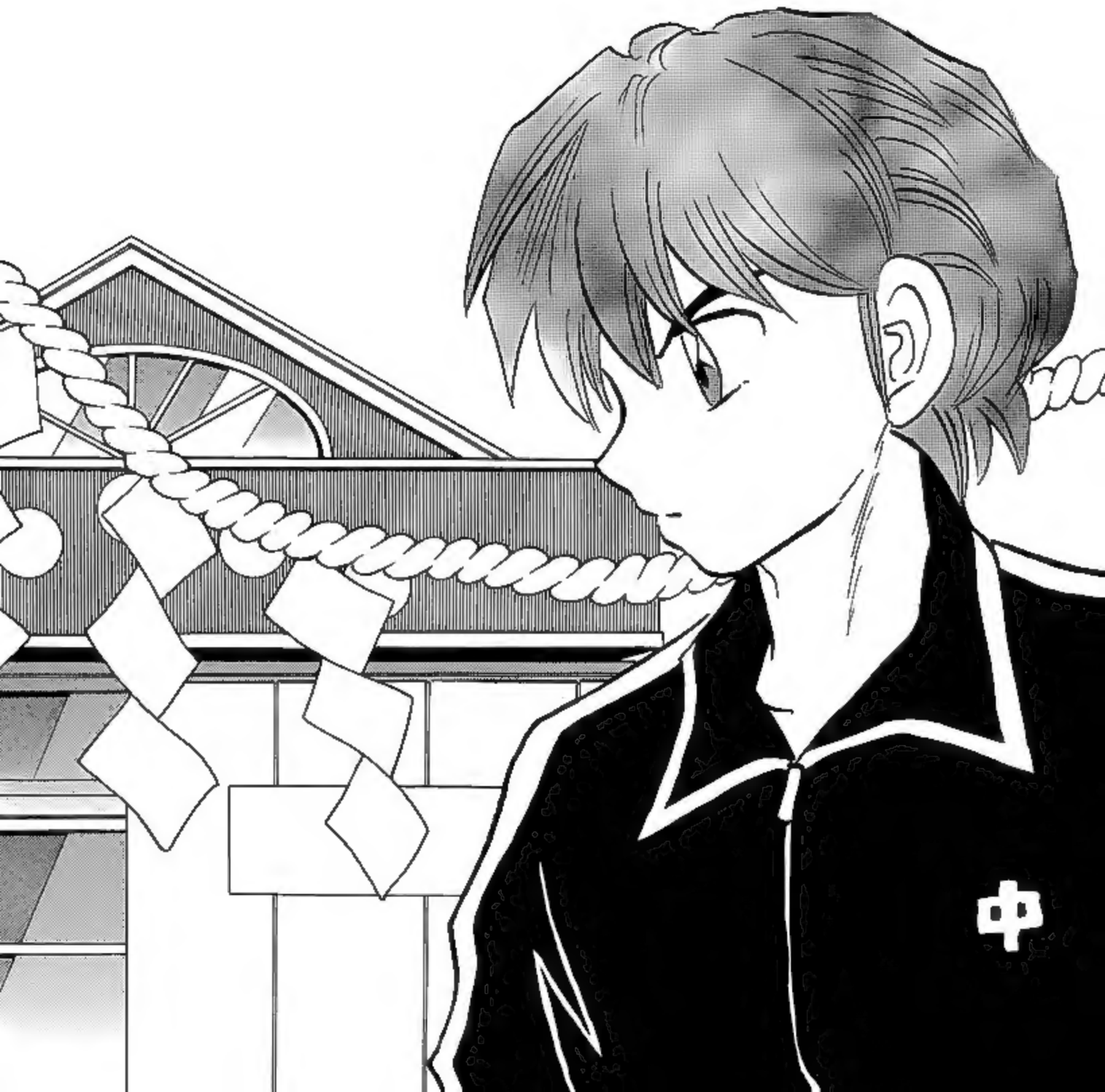
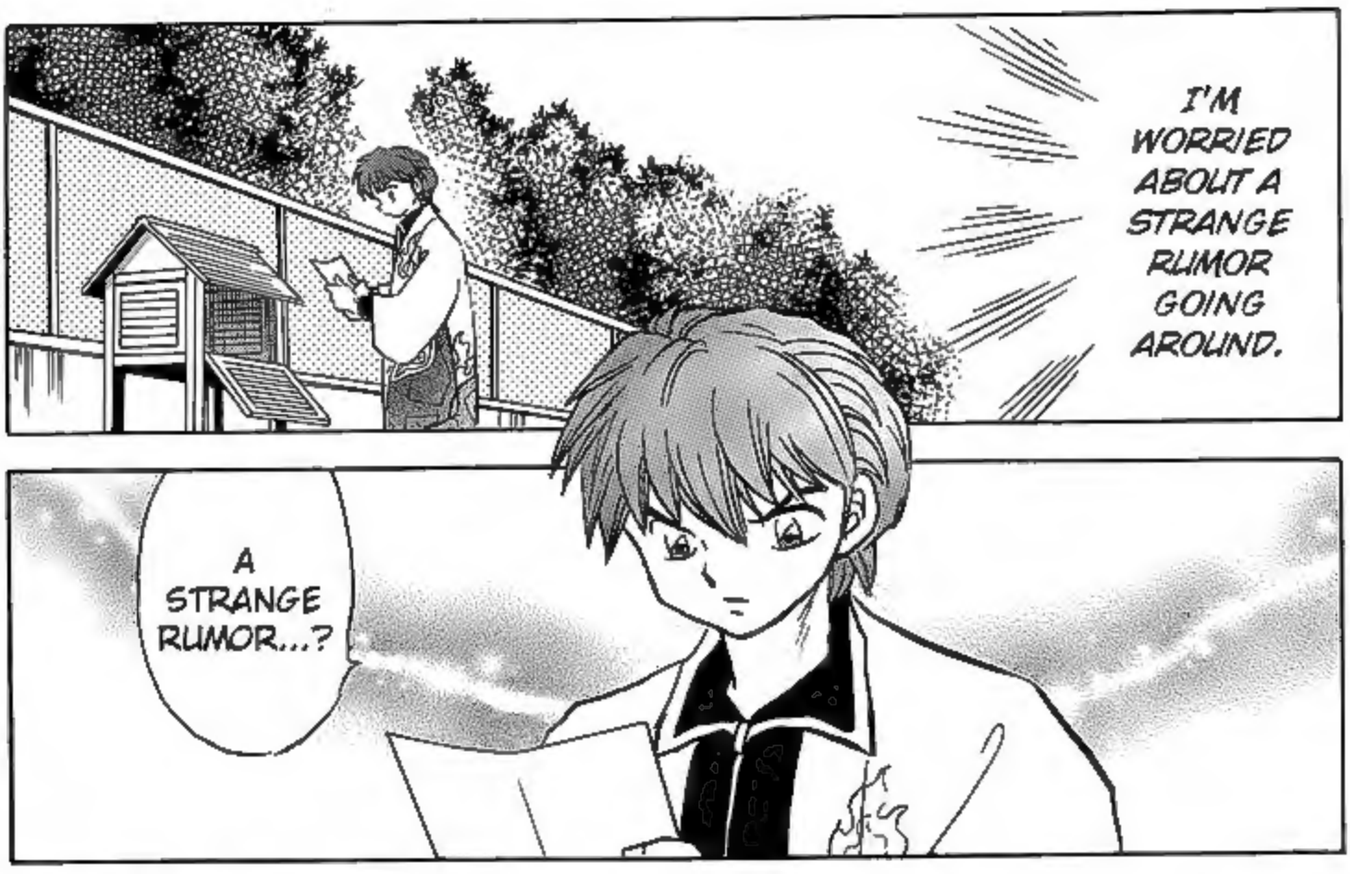
CHAPTER 212
MYSTERIOUS EVENT AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

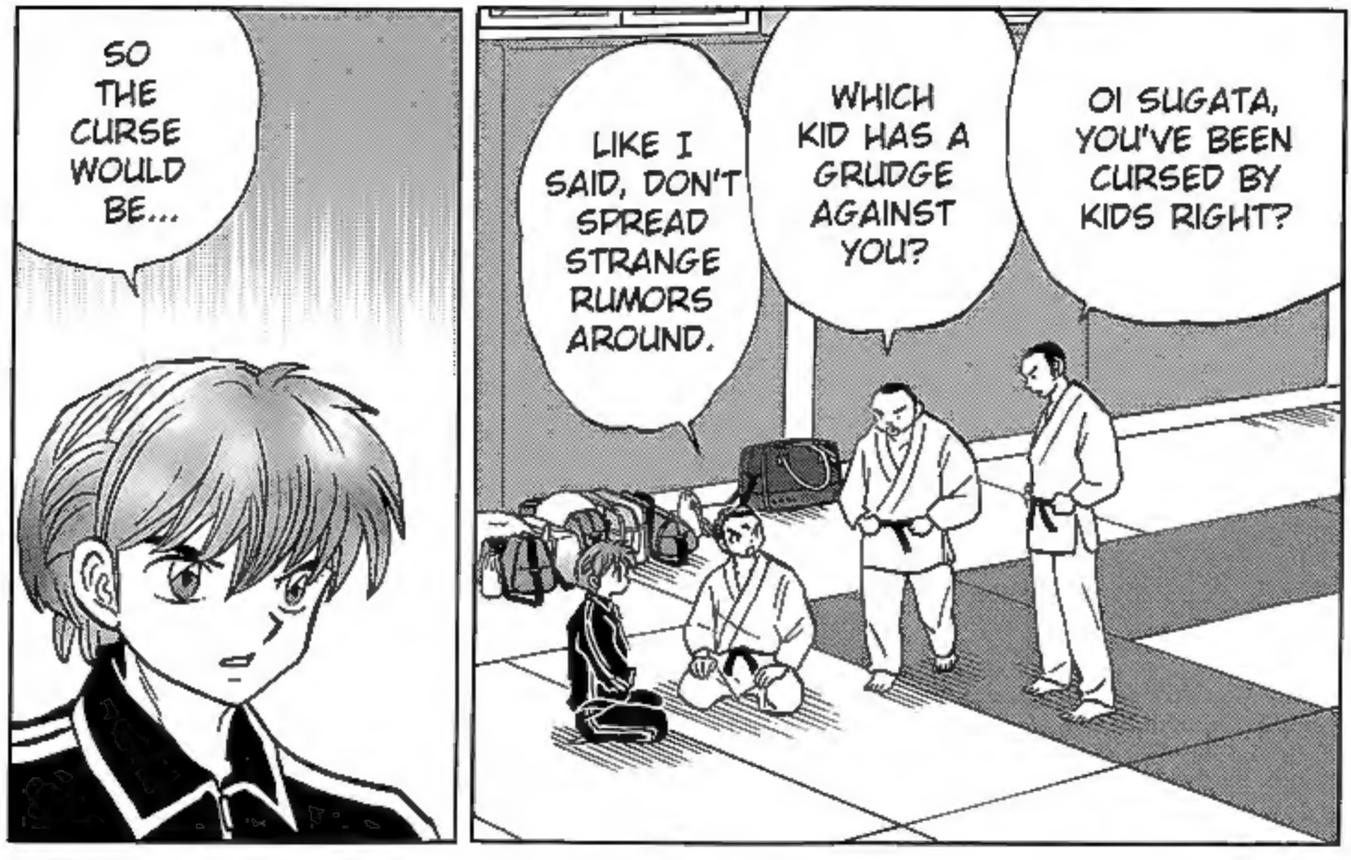



I'M WORRIED ABOUT A STRANGE RUMOR GOING AROUND.
A STRANGE RUMOR...?

SLAM
HUP!
The Judo club dojo

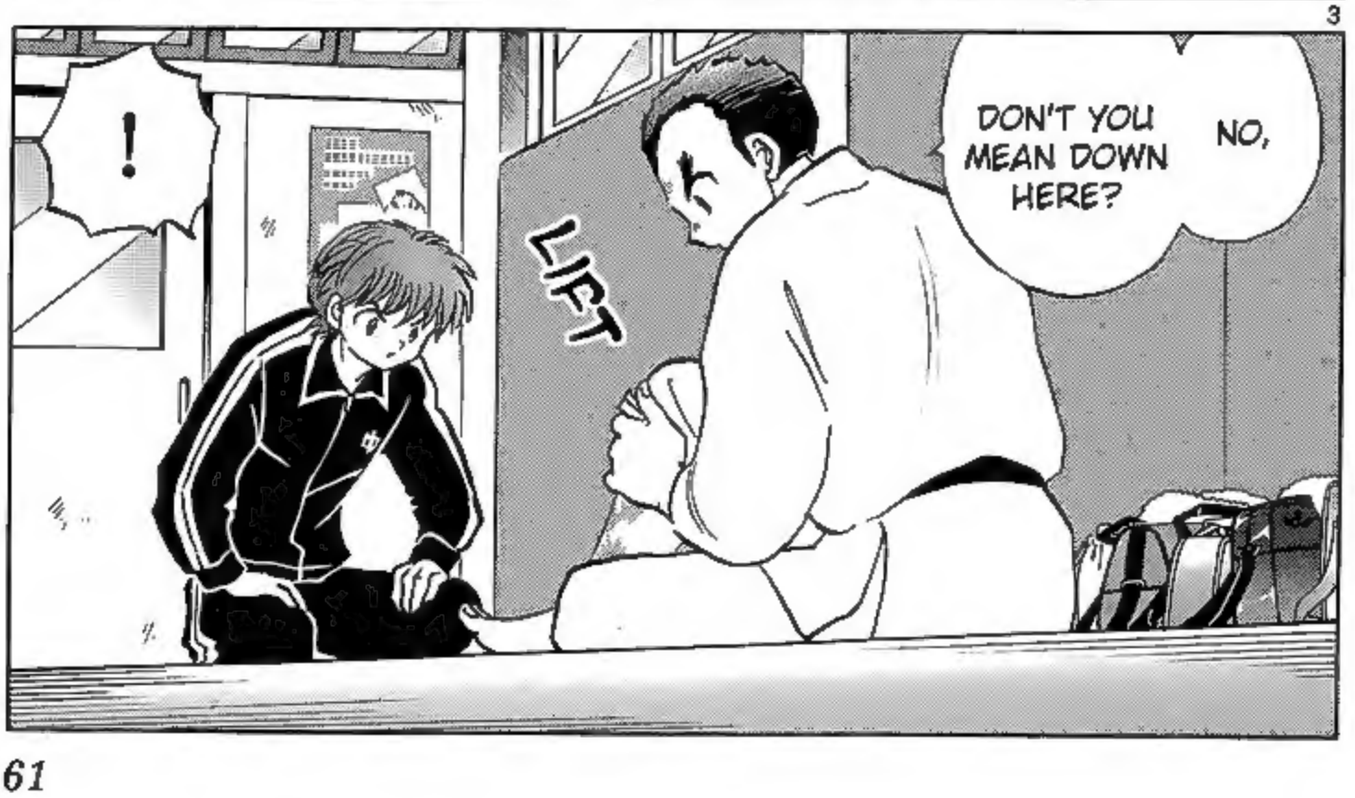
2

Second year Judo club member Sugata Sanjiro
I DIDN'T BULLY ANY KIDS.


SO THE CURSE WOULD BE...
OI SUGATA, YOU'VE BEEN CURSED BY KIDS RIGHT?
WHICH KID HAS A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU?
LIKE I SAID, DON'T SPREAD STRANGE RUMORS AROUND.

THE HANDPRINT ON YOUR FOREHEAD, RIGHT?

3

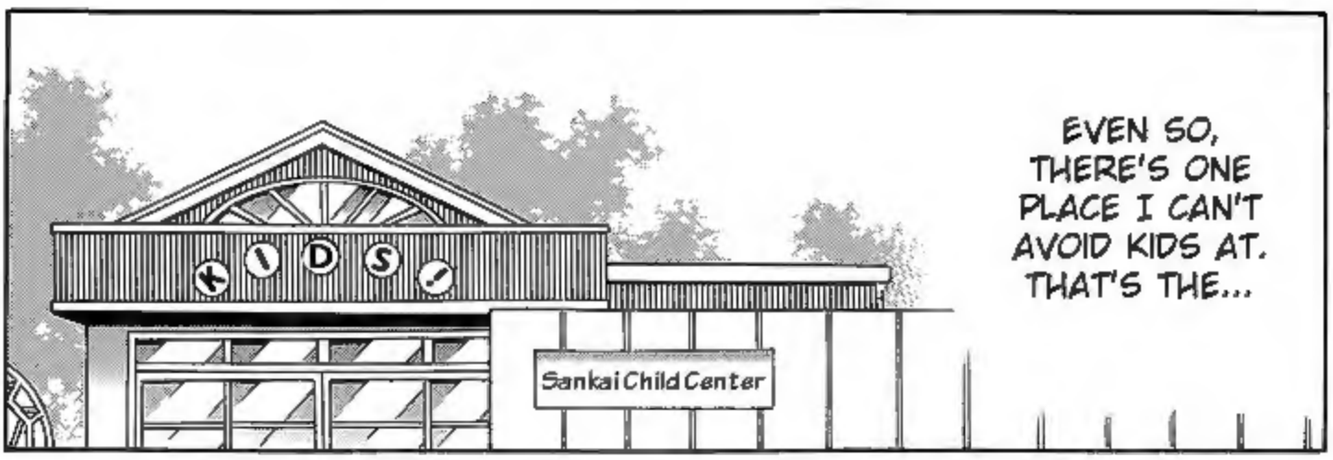

!
LIFT
DON'T YOU MEAN DOWN HERE?
NO,

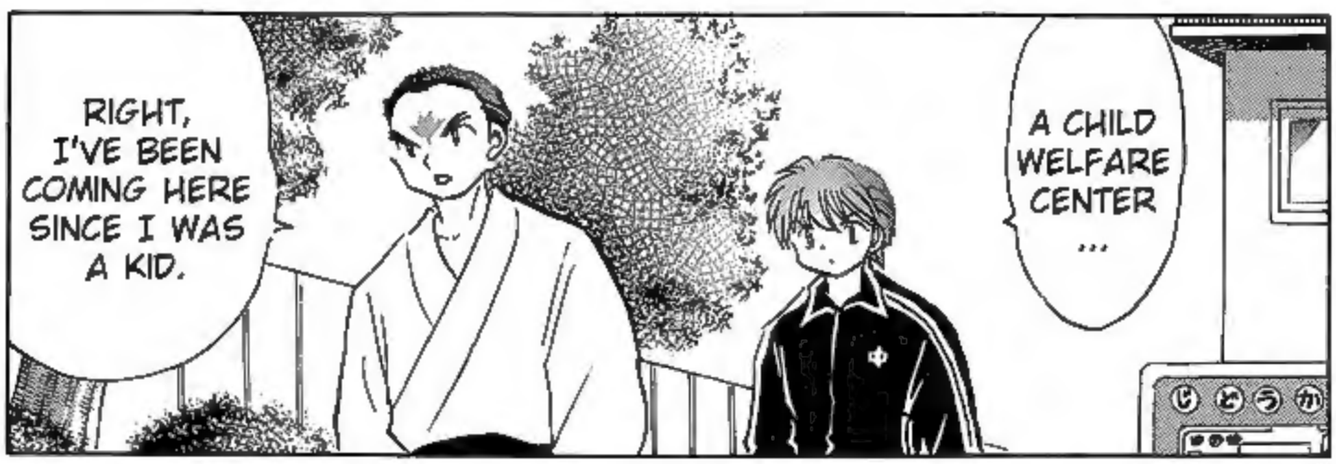
THOSE ARE...
STUCK EVERYWHERE

IF YOU MUST KNOW,
NO!
YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER BEING CURSED?
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S DEFINITELY KID'S HANDPRINTS, RIGHT?

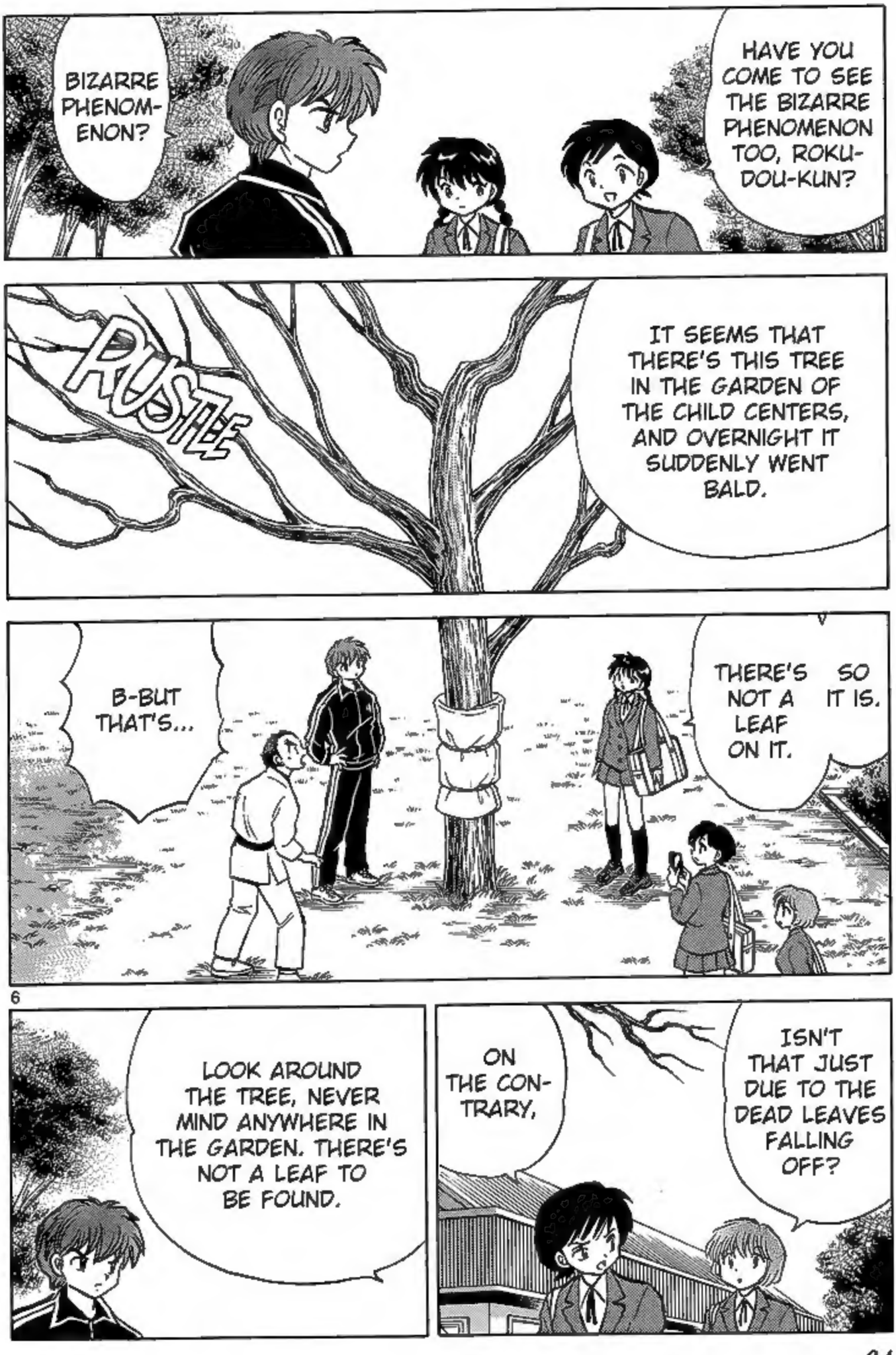
4

HUH.
THAT'S WHY I ABSOLUTELY DON'T GO ANYWHERE NEAR THEM!
I REALLY CAN'T STAND KIDS.


KIDS
Sankai Child Center
EVEN SO, THERE'S ONE PLACE I CAN'T AVOID KIDS AT. THAT'S THE...


RIGHT, I'VE BEEN COMING HERE SINCE I WAS A KID.
A CHILD WELFARE CENTER ...

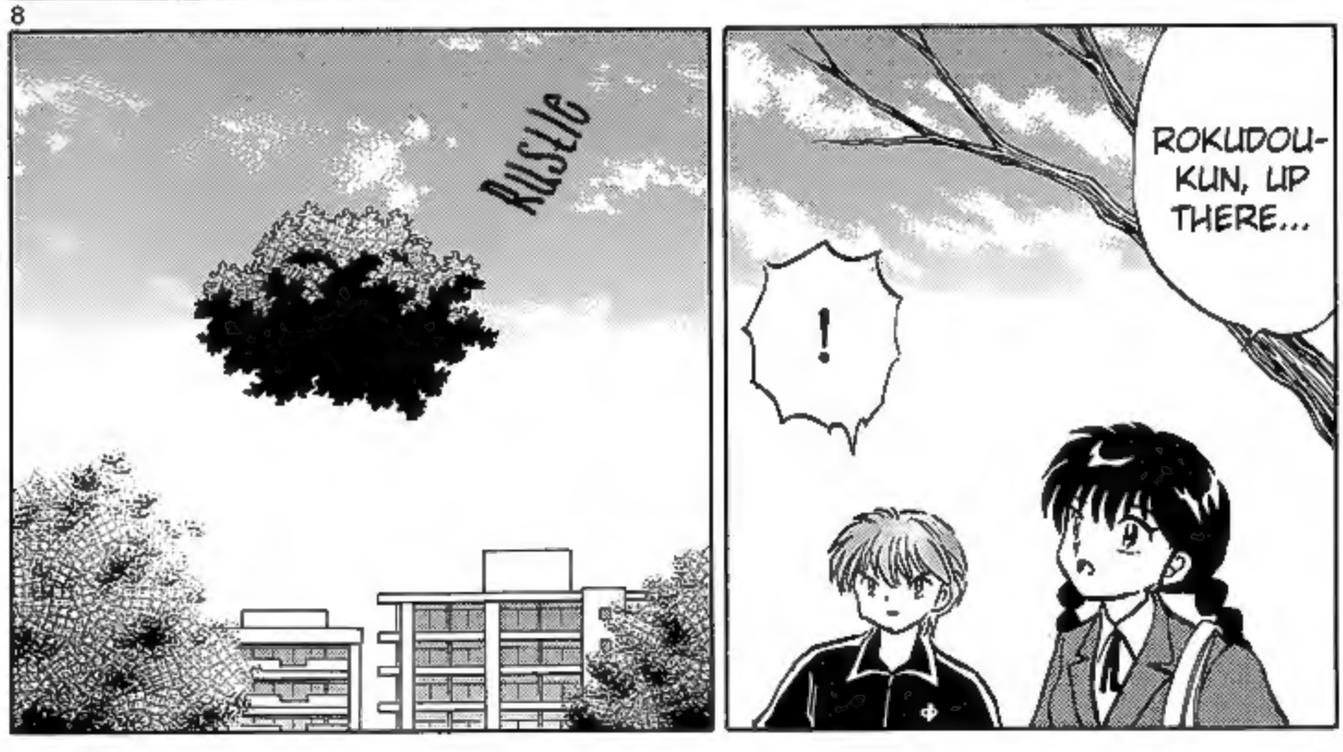
HUH? ROKUDOU-KUN.
MAMIYA SAKU-RA.
Child welfare centers are places where local kids can use to engage in wholesome play, or even study, free of charge.


BIZARRE PHENOM-ENON?
HAVE YOU COME TO SEE THE BIZARRE PHENOMENON TOO, ROKU-DOU-KUN?
RUSTLE
IT SEEMS THAT THERE'S THIS TREE IN THE GARDEN OF THE CHILD CENTERS, AND OVERNIGHT IT SUDDENLY WENT BALD.
B-BUT THAT'S...
THERE'S NOT A LEAF ON IT.
SO IT IS.
6
LOOK AROUND THE TREE, NEVER MIND ANYWHERE IN THE GARDEN. THERE'S NOT A LEAF TO BE FOUND.
ON THE CON-TRARY,
ISN'T THAT JUST DUE TO THE DEAD LEAVES FALLING OFF?

WELL, IF YOU PULL LIKE THIS ...
PULL
OH THIS?
JUST WHAT IS THAT WRAPPED AROUND THE TREE?
UMM ...
SO ...
JUST WHO WOULD DO SUCH A HORRIBLE THING?
DASH
QUIT INTERFERING WITH MY TRAIN-ING YA LOUSY DUMB BRATS!
Dummy! Dummy!
Woah!
FLINCH
LET'S HIT HIM WITH OUR BALL!
THAT YOUNG GUY CAME AGAIN~!
AH!
Excited
7
QUIT SPREAD-ING SUCH WEIRD RUMORS AROUND!
SO IT'S TRUE THAT HE WAS CURSED FOR BULLYING KIDS.
Whisper Whisper
HUH? ISN'T THAT SUGATA-SAN FROM THE JUDO CLUB?

I KNOW IT'S CAUSED BY SOME KIND OF LINGERING WISH, BUT WHAT...?

8



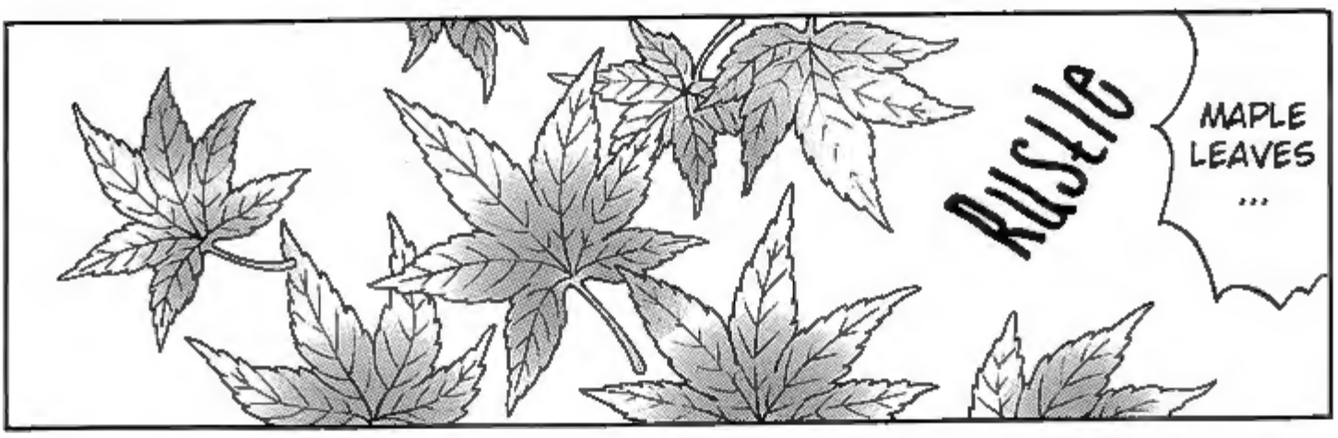
SLAP
T-WACK
SLAP
T-WACK
SLAP
WHAM
FSSSSSH

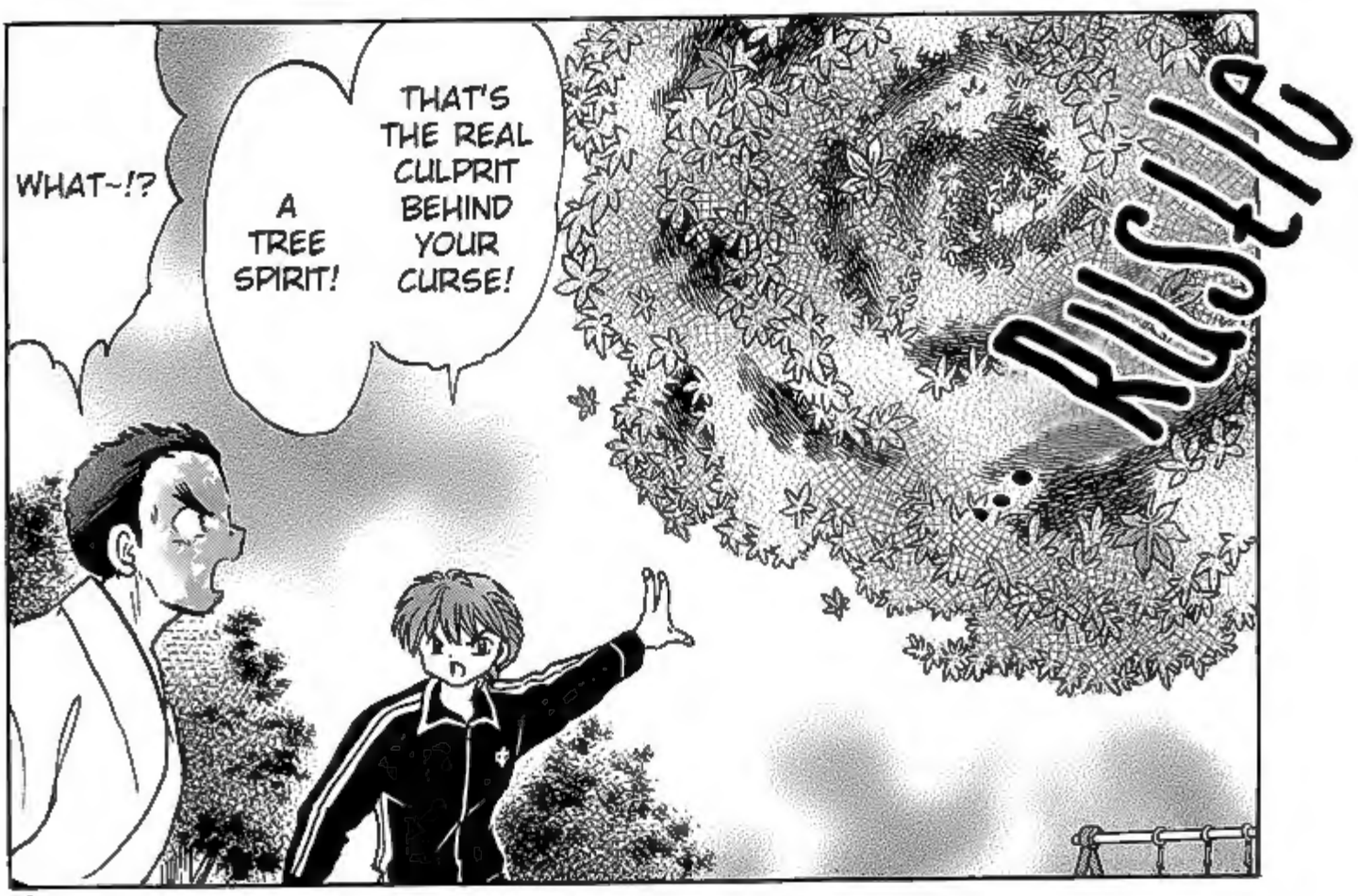
UGH...
EVERYWHERE
STUCK

9

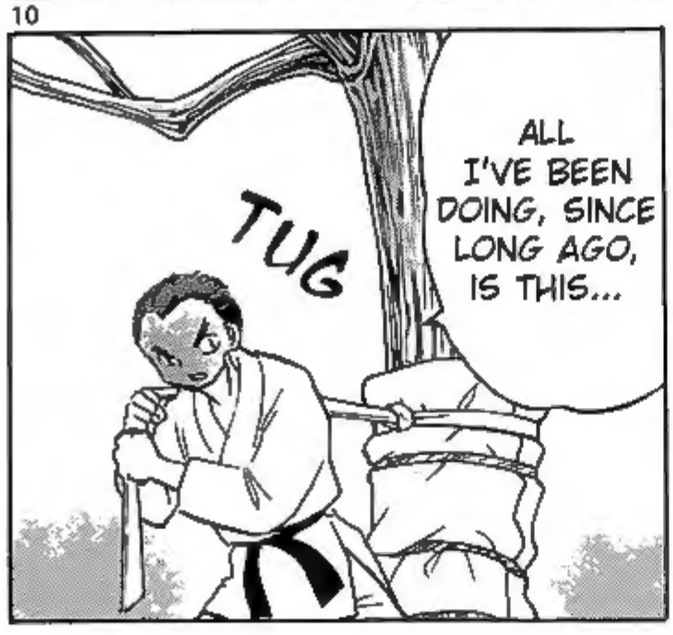
NO, THOSE ARE...
ZOOOM
KYAAH~!! SCARY~!!

K-KIDS' HANDPRINTS JUST CAME OUTTA NO-WHERE...

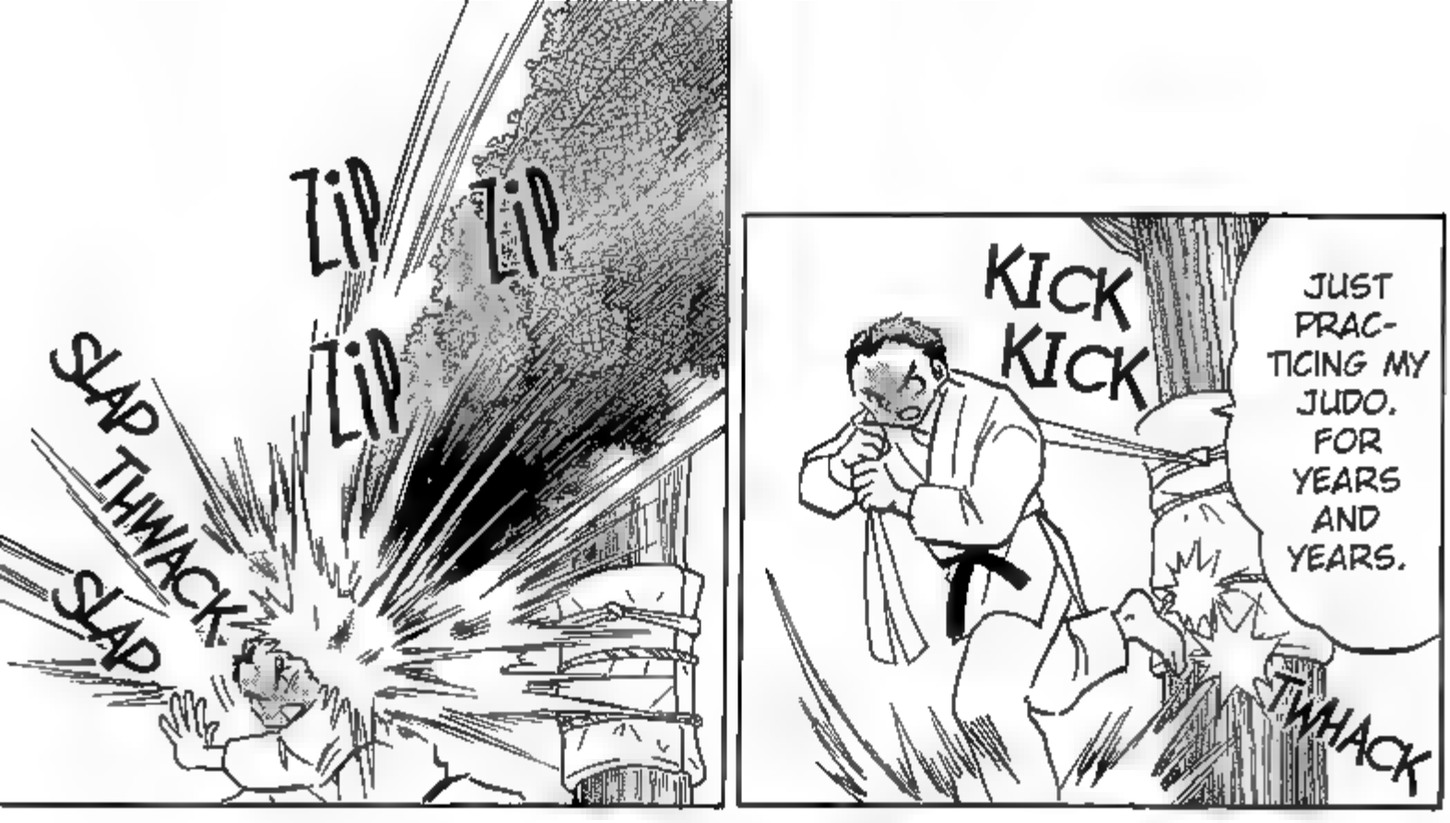

RUSTLE
MAPLE LEAVES ...


WHAT~!?
A TREE SPIRIT!
THAT'S THE REAL CULPRIT BEHIND YOUR CURSE!
RUSTLE

10


TUG
ALL I'VE BEEN DOING, SINCE LONG AGO, IS THIS...

NO!
SO... DO YOU REMEMBER DOING ANYTHING TO UPSET THE MAPLE TREE...?


ZIP
ZIP
ZIP
SLAP
THWACK
SLAP
KICK
KICK
JUST PRAC-TICING MY JUDO. FOR YEARS AND YEARS.
THWACK

YUP... THIS IS GONNA BE A BIT OF A PAIN TO DEAL WITH.
IT SEEMS... PRETTY MAD.

11

YEAH... YOU OFTEN HEAR ABOUT THIS KINDA THING.
GODS !?
ARE PRETTY CLOSE TO BEING GODS.
RUSTLE
YOU SEE, TREE SPIRITS ...

SUCH TALES OF TREE SPIRIT DIVINE PUNISHMENT ARE BEYOND COUNT.
FOR EXAMPLE, THOSE WHO TRY TO CUT DOWN A VERY LONG-LIVED TREE RUN INTO LOTS OF ACCI-DENTS...

ANYWAY, CALMING ANGRY SPIRITS IS NO SIMPLE MATTER.
IN-DEED.
THEN ALL THAT RAGE IS FROM BEING USED AS A PUNCHING BAG FOR JUDO PRACTICE...

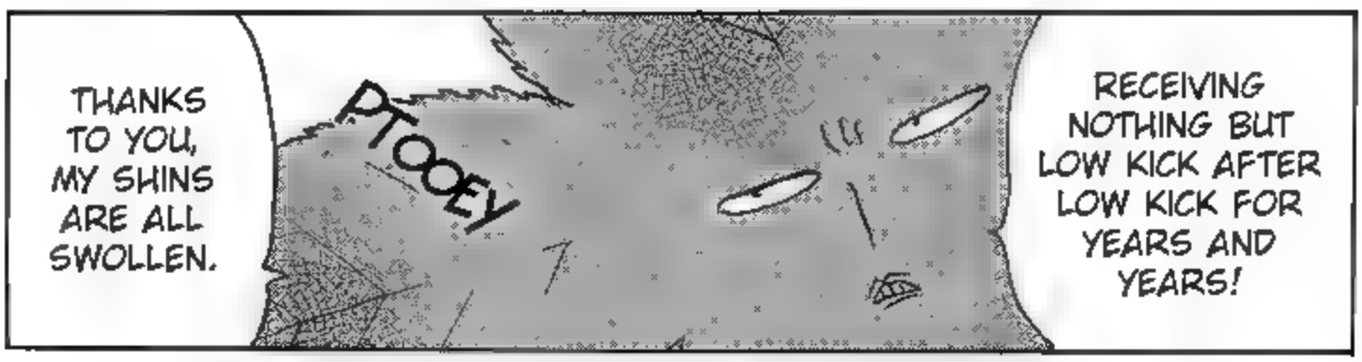
AND ALL THIS TIME I ACTUALLY THOUGHT THE TREE WAS MY JUDO PRACTICING PARTNER...
Dagger
N-NO WAY...

12

SNAP
REGARDLESS, YOU SHOULD SINCERELY APOLOGIZE.

WHOOSH
APPEAR BEFORE US!
MAPLE TREE SPIRIT!
Thwip Thwip
SPIRIT-LOWERING HOLY ROPE.
WHAT'S THAT, ROKUDOU-KUN?
OMINOUS
SPIN SPIN SPIN
13
FOOM

Shazam
!
WAH! OW OW OW!
POW
STOMP
KICK
MARCH MARCH MARCH
GOES WITH-OUT SAYING.
SO THIS IS THE MAPLE TREE SPIRIT ...


THANKS TO YOU, MY SHINS ARE ALL SWOLLEN.
PTOOEY
RECEIVING NOTHING BUT LOW KICK AFTER LOW KICK FOR YEARS AND YEARS!

THE CURSE MARKS WERE FOCUSED ON HIS SHINS. I GOT THAT, BUT...
I KNEW IT.

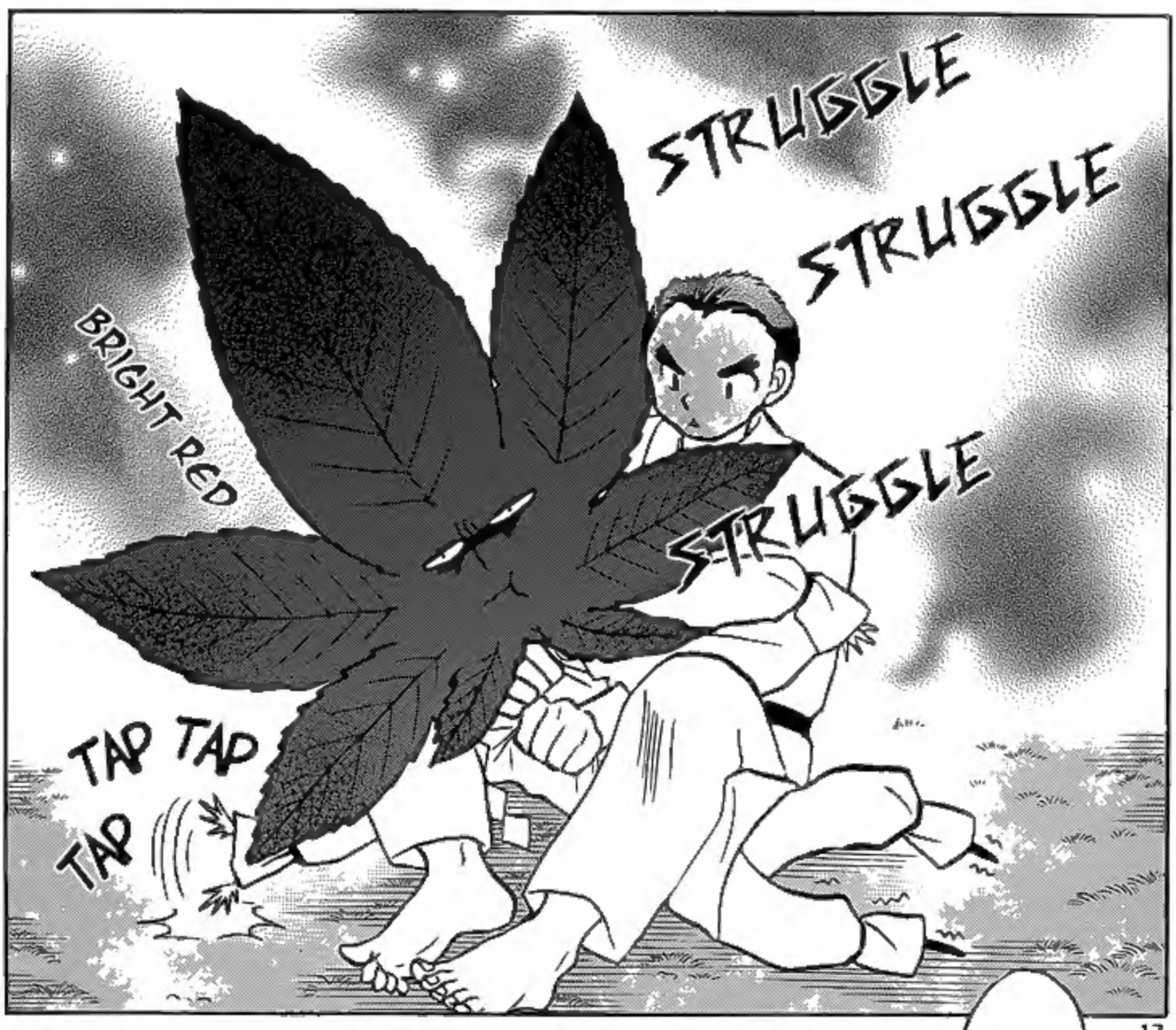
FORGET IT.
MY BAD.
NOW APOL-OGIZE.
PLEASE CALM YOUR RAGE.

15

Hai-ya!
Pow!
AT FIRST IT WAS A PLEASURE TO WATCH OVER THIS LITTLE PUNK.

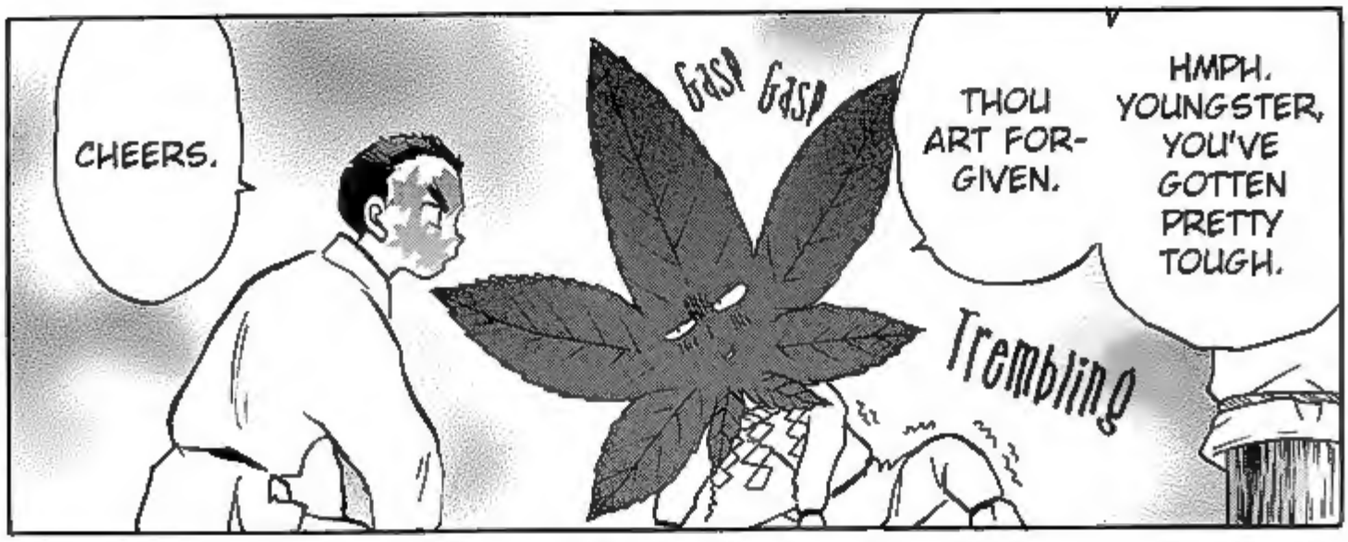
I THOUGHT IT WAS MY DESTINY TO GROW UP AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER...
I MEAN LITTLE KIDS' KICKS, THAT KINDA STUFF DOESN'T HURT.
Sei!
Yah!
STOMP STOMP
KNOCK IT OFF!
DAMN YOU!
OW!
BUT...
HMPH.
WELL, IF AN APOLOGY IS NO GOOD, THEN JUST WHAT DO YOU WANT...?
!
THOSE TECHNIQUES YOU'VE POLISHED OVER THE YEARS BY USING ME AS A SPARRING PARTNER... DEFEATING THEM WITH MY DIVINE POWER SHALL CALM MY RAGE!
IT IS ALSO MY DESTINY TO RECEIVE THIS BODY LIKE THIS...
16
SO THEN... IF I WIN, YOU'LL FORGIVE ME?

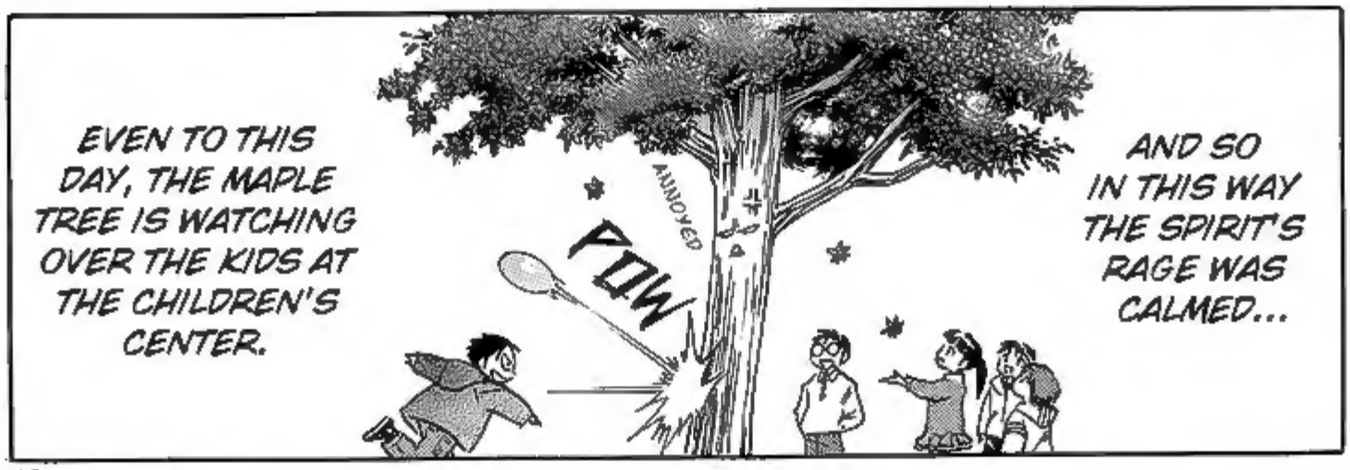
MENACING
COME AT ME THEN, YOUNG-STER!
TUG TUG
HMPH, SO A MERE HUMAN THINKS HE CAN BEAT ME.


STRUGGLE
STRUGGLE
STRUGGLE
BRIGHT RED
TAP TAP TAP

17

INSTANT DEFEAT.
BUT WITH A PINNING TECHNIQUE HE DIDN'T USE IN TRAINING.


CHEERS.
Gasp Gasp
THOU ART FORGIVEN.
HMPH. YOUNGSTER, YOU'VE GOTTEN PRETTY TOUGH.
Trembling


EVEN TO THIS DAY, THE MAPLE TREE IS WATCHING OVER THE KIDS AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER.
ANNOYED
POW
AND SO IN THIS WAY THE SPIRIT'S RAGE WAS CALMED...

I'LL NEVER PRACTICE ON A MAPLE TREE AGAIN.
I WRONGED THAT MAPLE TREE.
NATURALLY, SUGATA-SAN'S CURSE WAS LIFTED TOO...

MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST STICK TO STUDYING INSTEAD.
SOMEHOW I'VE BEEN CURSED AGAIN.

Roselia Scanlations

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